

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

**Grade 6: Lesson 9-The Wall (Chapter 4)**

**August 18, 1961**

East Berlin

5:45 A.M.

Franz woke up to someone gently shaking him and whispering his name. He had fallen asleep at his desk the night before and felt disoriented. When he lifted his heavy head from his desk and blinked the fog from his eyes, Franz saw his father standing next to him.

“Vater?”

“Guten morgen, Franz.”

Franz couldn’t believe his eyes. “Am I still dreaming?” he wondered aloud. Franz had feared he would never see his father again, but now he was miraculously standing there in the bedroom. Franz had a million questions, but for the moment he wanted nothing more than to embrace his father tightly and never let go.

“Son, I’m so happy to be home,” his father said, squeezing him back. “But there are serious things to be discussed now.”

Franz followed his father to the living room, where his mother and grandparents were already waiting. The air was thick with tension. Franz had the sinking feeling that his father’s return did not mean that the family’s troubles were over.

Franz’s mother poured tea for everyone, and the family sat huddled around the steaming mugs as his father recounted the story of how he had made it back to East Berlin.

“After the wall was built, all of us East Berliners were told that we would not be able to return home. No one understood what was happening, and the authorities couldn’t answer any of my questions. I had no way of contacting you. You can’t imagine how frightened and confused everyone was. But last night, I unexpectedly received a sealed note from a young soldier. When I opened it, I was baffled . . . it was from Franz!”

Franz then explained how he had given the note to Karl, who said he would try to figure out a way to get it across the wall.

“This soldier, Karl’s friend,” continued Franz’s father, “he told me about another soldier who knew a secret way through the wall. But I had to pay him an entire week’s wages for that information. That man told me about an old apartment building that was exactly on the border between East and West Berlin. The wall had been built around the building, but it wasn’t entirely sealed off yet. He led me through the building’s front door in West Berlin, and I simply walked out the back door and came out in East Berlin. It was worth every penny!”

His father’s eyes were bright and lively as he looked at his family. But when they rested on Franz, a cloud came over his face. “Unfortunately, going back won’t be so simple.”

“*Going back?*” said Franz. “But you just got back. And *this* is our home. How can we leave?”

“Franz, we can’t stay in East Berlin anymore. I’m sorry. I know your friends and school are here, but we have no choice but to leave. You see, the wall is just the beginning. Life here is changing for the worse. I cannot allow my family to live in a city that is being turned into a prison. I’ve already rented an apartment for us in West Berlin, and we’ll begin a new life there together as a family.” His father paused. He looked at Franz, and he steeled himself to deliver one final blow. “Franz, we’ll leave tonight.”

His father’s words struck him deep inside, and a wave of sadness washed over Franz at the thought of never seeing his friends again. Streams of fond memories, like a slide show of his life in East Berlin, flashed through his mind. *Can this really be happening?* But he knew his father was right. The wall had nearly stolen his father from him, and he couldn’t imagine living fearfully in its shadow.

“But how will we escape?” Franz asked.

“Unfortunately, we can’t risk using any of the buildings that run along the wall to escape. By now, the windows and doors of the building where I snuck out will likely be bricked off, and buildings like that will be watched closely. But thanks to you, Franz, there might just be another way.”

Franz’s father then told the rest of the family about the poorly guarded section of the wall that Franz had discovered. The family would set out under cover of darkness, and would climb over that spot in the wall in the minutes between the guards’ patrols.

“We must leave tonight, but it’s important that we act as if today is a normal day. We cannot risk raising suspicion. So hurry off to school and do not say a word about this to any of your friends.”

At school, Franz struggled to pay attention. He was too lost in daydreams about his family’s plan to escape. Though he was nervous, he was also excited about the thrill of a secret mission. His excitement was shattered, however, by a disturbing announcement from his teacher.

“Agatha Richter will no longer be in class. She and her family were arrested yesterday evening for attempting to escape to West Berlin.” The alarming news of his classmate’s arrest weighed on him like a bear, and caused the minutes and seconds of the day to slow to a crawl. Franz waited in misery for school to end, his mind plagued by thoughts of everything that could go wrong. His family could end up in jail—or worse. But he knew his father would not turn back from their plan now.

Franz raced home from school and began to pack his bag. His father insisted that they travel light. He didn’t want them to call attention to themselves in the streets, and they needed to make sure they’d be able to climb the wall easily. Franz packed only the most essential items: a few pairs of pants, some shirts, socks, and his favorite book. He had read Alexandre Dumas’s *The Count of Monte Cristo* many times, and hoped he could summon the Count’s legendary courage tonight. He stared at the book before dropping it into his bag and wondered if his own story would have a happy ending.

### **Independent Practice**

Your independent practice has two parts:

1. Choose at least 3 of the figurative language examples we’ve found in our text today (see below) and write original sentences using those examples in a different context.

For example: As I stood by the pool preparing to jump in, a memory flashed in my mind of the time my sister jumped in without her life jacket and almost drowned. I stepped back from the edge as if I'd been burned. (See how I threw in even more figurative *language...as if I'd been burned.*)

Figurative Language Examples from Text

blinked the fog from his eyes

The air was thick with tension.

A cloud came over his face

One final blow

wave of sadness washed over Franz

Streams of fond memories

like a slide show of his life in East Berlin

flashed through his mind. *Can this really be happening?*

The wall had nearly stolen his father from him

weighed on him like a bear

caused the minutes and seconds of the day to slow to a crawl

2. Collect some examples of figurative language that you read, hear, or watch. Record on the same paper that you wrote your own sentences for #1. You may be surprised at how many you notice when you are looking for them! Happy hunting!



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